

Bill Heads to Senate for Final Approval
October 1, 2009

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, the U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation that includes \$35,045,000 in earmarks Congressman Charlie Melancon (LA-03) secured for projects in the Third Congressional District. The funding was included in the fiscal year 2010 Energy and Water Appropriations conference report (H.R. 3183). The conference report now goes to the Senate for passage, and then to the President to be signed in to law. This annual funding bill will provide a total of \$5.4 billion for Army Corps of Engineers projects nationwide.

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"Protecting our coastal communities from hurricanes is vital to the future of south Louisiana," said Rep. Melancon. "These earmarks will return over \$35 million in taxpayer dollars to Louisiana to strengthen our hurricane and flood protection, and I am proud to have worked with our Senators to secure them. These federal investments will also support businesses in our state - particularly the oil and gas industry - by ensuring they have navigable waterways connecting our inland ports with the Gulf of Mexico.

"I am extremely disappointed that two hurricane protection projects critical to south Louisiana - Morganza to the Gulf in Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes and Pump to the River in New Orleans - will not be advanced by this bill. Louisianians who are depending on these projects to protect their homes and businesses are losing patience with the Army Corps, and I share their frustration. Without this protection, we spend every hurricane season hoping and praying that another Katrina or Gustav doesn't destroy what we have worked so hard to rebuild."

"In the coming weeks, I will be aggressively working to find a pathway to advance both Morganza and Pump to the River, and will hold the Corps accountable for building the best possible hurricane protection for the people of south Louisiana."

Congressman Melancon requested the following earmarks, which were included in the conference report.

Hurricane Protection & Flood Control Projects

\$5,800,000 to upgrade the Larose to Golden Meadow Levee System. This funding will go toward upgrading this ring levee system to help provide a 100-year level of hurricane protection to the communities located along Bayou Lafourche between Larose and Golden Meadow.

\$386,000 to study the proposed Donaldsonville to the Gulf Levee System.□ This earmark will fund a feasibility study for a project to reduce the risk of flooding from coastal storm surge and rainfall, and to prevent further economic losses and environmental damage in the Barataria Basin.

\$14,491,000 to continue levee improvements in the Atchafalaya Basin Floodway. This funding will support continued construction of the Atchafalaya Basin project, a leveed floodway about 15 miles wide and 110 miles long that extends from Old River, LA, to the Gulf of Mexico. The principal role of the Atchafalaya Basin floodway is to convey half of the Mississippi River and Tributaries floodwaters safely to the Gulf of Mexico. The project contains 449 miles of levees. Continuing construction of levee improvements is critical to protect the lives of thousands of people and critical hurricane evacuation infrastructure.

\$157,000 to study flood control in St. Charles Parish.□ This funding will be used to investigate methods to reduce flood damages caused by rainfall. Alternatives under consideration include pump stations in the existing hurricane protection levee and interior drainage improvements

\$170,000 to study stronger flood and hurricane protection for the west shore of Lake Pontchartrain.□ This funding will be used to study the cost of providing better hurricane and storm damage risk reduction to residents on the west shore of Lake Pontchartrain. Major flooding problems in the area occurred as a result of Hurricanes Betsy (1965), Juan (1985), Katrina (2005), Gustav and Ike (2008). The population of the study area has increased from 25,500 in 1960 to over 47,000 in 1990.

— Navigational Channel Dredging

\$11,062,000 for dredging the navigational channel on the Atchafalaya River & Bayous Chene, Boeuf, and Black. This appropriation will be used to dredge and maintain the navigational channel between the Gulf of Mexico and rig fabrication and oil service facilities in the Amelia area, east of Morgan City. The channel in the Atchafalaya River is critical to the Port of Morgan City. The river system provides export access for the area's offshore oil and gas products and import access for raw materials.

\$2,441,000 for maintenance and dredging of Houma Navigational Canal.□ This funding will be used to maintain and dredge the Houma Navigation Canal, which extends 38 miles from the GIWW in Houma to the Gulf of Mexico.

\$538,000 to study deepening the navigational channel from the Port of Iberia to the Gulf.□ This funding will be used to investigate the feasibility of providing a deeper and wider navigation channel from the Port of Iberia to the Gulf of Mexico for the transportation of deepwater offshore exploration and production equipment fabricated at the port.

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